



Volunteers assisting in removal



An example of the loss incurred to many homes

JULY 2004 PETERBOROUGH FLOODS CITY DECLARES STATE OF EMERGENCY

Robert Kearns, VE3KEA
Peterborough ARES Emergency Coordinator

In response to the state of emergency called by the City of Peterborough because of heavy flooding, Amateur Radio Operators collectively provided 700 hours of communications support.

On July 15, 2004 at 6:50 am, Peterborough ARES Emergency Coordinator Robert Kearns, VE3KEA, received a phone call from D. Humber of the Peterborough Police Department with a request to have ARES members placed on stand-by because of heavy rains and winds which were causing flooding in the Peterborough Area. At the time of the call, Robert was already pumping out water from his own basement, which had reached approximately three-feet in depth.

Calls were made to all ARES members that were home to be on stand-by, and within an hour of the first call a state of emergency was declared by the municipality. All ARES members who were available were called to take up their places at the following sites: Peterborough Police Department, Sir Sandford Fleming College, the Command Post at the

Evinrude Center, and various other locations about the Evinrude Community Center.

Command of operation was initialized at the Police Department. Command Post Informational messages were passed to the Evinrude Community Centre and to the Sir Sandford Fleming College. Amateur Radio stations were promptly set up to support the Red Cross, Salvation Army and Social Services communications needs. Red Cross and Social Services were both in operations at the College. Standard NTS messages forms were not utilized as most of the traffic was of tactical nature. Messages consisted of confirmation of the events that were happening at the time, i.e., updates to the agencies that were involved. All tactical messages were brief and to the point and found to be the simplest format of exchanging information.

At some point, it became necessary to evacuate all residents from the local Extendicare Nursing Home because of heavy water damage to the roof of the building. The residents were temporarily moved to the Evinrude Center, and later that evening were moved a second time to a more suitable location at the Mary Crest Nursing Home.



Volunteer firefighters, removing damaged goods from flooded basements



ARES members provided communications until 11:00 pm that evening and assisted Staff with bringing the residents into the building. After five continuous days of providing communications from 8:00 am to 7:00 pm, operators stood down from the Main Emergency — but remained on stand-by until further notice.

ARES members were on two days stand down when they were recalled to support communications for the Fire and Rescue Department officials and the many other Volunteer support groups who came from out of town. These groups were tasked with the removal of furniture and other items from flooded basements. The Fire and Rescue Departments along with City Works Crews assisted residents who were pumping out their flooded basements.

The Canadian Red Cross volunteers and staff registered evacuees and provided cots at both the Evinrude Community Centre and the Fleming College evacuation centers, while the Social Services provided shelter and clothing to those that required it. The Salvation Army supplied food and other assistance that are part of their normal mandate. All of these support service groups did an excellent job and should be greatly commended for their work.



ARES members continued passing tactical messages as this format was deemed to be the best way to effectively and efficiently pass information. All communications during the declared emergency consisted of logistical operations with the Fire and Rescue Departments at the Command Post requesting information to be sent to the various Groups in the area, charged with the tasks of waste removal of damaged material and pumping operations. ARES also had the opportunity to work with the Fire and Rescue Department in the installation of an antenna that provided a direct communications link between the agencies.



Don, VE3DHP and firefighters getting location from fire department chief

It was a pleasure to work with the first responders as well as the many other volunteer groups who participated during these trying times. After 14 days of continuous communications support and having collectively providing 700 hours, ARES members were placed on stand-by and within a few days were released from all assigned duties when the state of emergency was officially lifted.



Inside the command post, showing fire personell and ops board

Peterborough ARES Emergency Coordinator, Robert Kearns, VE3KEA, extends his thanks and appreciation to following Amateurs who so generously contributed their time, energy, skills and equipment to this communication request.

- Eric Lansdell, VE3EAL – Communicator
- Bill Mantel, VE3BME – Communicator
- Jim Pearce, VE3PLP – Communications Coordinator
- Rick Page, VE3IQZ – Repeater Technician
- Frank Hancock, VE3HFJ – Communicator
- Don Pettypiece, VE3DHP – Communicator
- Teresa Monaghan, VE3TZM – Communicator
- Hilda Gilpin, VE3HIG – Communicator
- Barry Monaghan, VE3BLM – Communicator
- Doug Gilpin, VE3DEG – Communicator
- Ken Dixon, VE3KP – Volunteer Communicator
- Harman Minnema, VE3EMA – Communicator
- Keith Smith, VA3HXC – Communicator
- Ashley Preston, VA3APN – Red Cross Operations
- Tony Michelin, VE3VLO – Sir Sandford College
- Dennis Gareau, VE3DHG – Sir Sandford College
- Dave Giles, VA3DSG – Communicator
- Bob Morrow, VE3RRO – Communicator